

THE REFORMER.

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[VOL. I.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth. - - - Jeremiah, v. 1.

EDITORIAL.

It is a fact which almost every day's observation will serve to confirm, that where there is not a principle of integrity and sincerity in the heart, it is in vain to reason with a person, or attempt to bring him to relinquish wrong practices. It is on this account, that so few in every age of the world, have received a true testimony when it has been delivered : for if such persons are convinced of the truth, they will act in direct opposition to it, if by yielding to its requirements it would subject them to reproach, cause them to loose their good name, or operate against their interest. *Self* being the only principle they act from, they will not *hazard* any thing for *truth's sake*.

It is greatly to be lamented, that there are so many who answer to this description, now in the world ; as it renders the prospect, in regard to any important change for the better, at present peculiarly gloomy. By what means a thorough reformation in the earth will ultimately be effected, (as effected it one day will be,) time must determine. For our own part, we have no doubt but mankind are now fast ripening for afflictions and calamities ; and that scenes of the most trying nature will hereafter be experienced by such as are truly

faithful. A new era will, indeed, at no very distant period, be presented, and two causes will be contested throughout the christian world. For according to the sure word of prophecy, *three unclean spirits like frogs will come out of the mouth of the dragon*; [temporal governments of the earth:] *and out of the mouth of the beast*, [corrupt denominations of professing christians:] *and out of the mouth of the false prophet*: [false ministers and teachers:] “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” See also Rev. xix. 19,—“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” Here is evidently implied a most extensive combination of worldly powers, with religious hierarchies, against the cause of God and true righteousness: and already, it would seem, the materials for such an event are preparing on the earth. Religious teachers in most communities of professing christians, are becoming more like the world, and consequently, are more loved and esteemed by the world; and have more influence with the rulers of the world: and in all probability after a time, they will be prepared to act in perfect unison with their wishes, and undertake to oppose and put down whatever may come forth in condemnation of their ways, or calculated to frustrate their designs and interests.

There is even now, hardly an editor of a News-paper or other periodical work, but is ready on every occa-

sion, to set forth and commend the splendid and pompous undertakings, going forward among the more corrupt religious teachers of the present day, and hold them up as worthy of imitation for others. We sometimes see column after column in their Journals, occupied with things of this nature, in which are lauded the plans set on foot by a corrupt and ambitious priesthood, to strengthen their cause, by training up young men to be the very reverse of what Christ and the apostles were in this world ; and whose preaching will only tend to destroy the little true christianity that is yet remaining. To show the part many of our News-paper editors are disposed to take in these concerns, we will here subjoin some remarks in the New-York "Evening Post," of October 28.—By way of introduction to the *Bye-Laws* of the "Protestant Episcopal Theological Education Society," lately formed in New-York, the editor observes:

"We are gratified to find by the annexed proceedings of the trustees of the Protestant Episcopal Theological Education Society, that they are executing their important trust with so much judgment and zeal. Independently of every other consideration, we feel interested for their success from a regard to the honor of the state. Distinguished as she is for the liberal application of her resources to internal improvements, and public education, we are solicitous that her citizens should not appear indifferent to the important cause of *theological science*. How many momentous interests depend upon a well-educated as well as pious clergy. In respect to the promotion of science and religion, the liberality of the citizens of Massachusetts is most worthy of praise and imitation. In a list which is now before us of the officers of the university of *Cambridge* in that state, we perceive no less than *fifteen* professorships founded by

individuals; and three individuals have founded each three professorships.* In a list also of the benefactions to the theological institution at *Andover* in the same state, we notice the following: Saml. Abbott, Esq. \$100,000; William Bartlett, Esq. \$90,000; Mrs. Norris, \$30,000; W. Philips and Son, 15,000 dollars; John Norris, Esq. \$10,000; M. Brown, Esq. \$10,000. In Massachusetts, it is the *fashion* for wealthy individuals to devote their wealth to the promotion of the high interests of science and religion. By recurring to the annexed bye-laws, we find that professorships, scholarships and fellowships, founded by individuals or congregations, bear their names, and that they have the right of nomination. In the highly respectable denomination of Episcopalians, among whom rank some of the wealthiest members of the community, we hope there are individuals who can be excited by a regard to the exalted interests of religion, the reputation of their church, and the honor of their state and city, to step forward on this occasion and endow professorships, &c. Sure we are that they would set a proud example—and that they would deserve and receive the thanks of the present generation, and the lasting blessings of posterity.”

An editor ought to blush to own himself the writer of such an article; but such are the views, and such is the taste of the present age, that we suppose it just calculated to give his paper currency. If he be a professor of christianity, he must be but poorly instructed in the school of Christ; and if a mere man of the world, it would have better become him to remain silent on the subject; as he cannot be supposed to be very competent to decide whether or not the cause of *Theological science*, as it is now taught in our Theological Seminaries, is so

Note by the Editors.—To found a *professorship* in this University, we suppose, requires not less than twenty or twenty-five thousand dollars. Twenty-five thousand dollars is the sum fixed on to found a professorship at the Andover and Princeton Seminaries.

very important to the *interests of religion*. We should not be surprised, if such editors hereafter, should recommend to the State Legislatures, or to the General Government, to patronize these societies, and make donations to them: and in the next place, things may be put in train, to establish corrupt religion by law, and have every one fined or imprisoned, who should raise his voice against popular error and degeneracy. Such a state of things would be likely to winnow out the chaff from amongst the wheat, and the sheep and goats in religion would quickly be distinguished; for they would no longer herd with each other: and therefore, some good might come out of this evil, as formerly has been the case. Has a *separation*, indeed, between the *precious* and the *vile* ever taken place in any age, without persecution and suffering?

For The Reformer.

ON THE USE OF TITLES AMONGST CHRISTIANS.

(*Concluded from page 222.*)

“Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person; neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away.” *Elihu.*

Every thing should have its appropriate name. The offices of men, as well as men themselves, require to be distinguished by significant terms. Whatever objection, therefore, may be on the part of a christian, to any particular office, there can be no objection to the use of any term properly indicating that office. But when such term is used as an *honourable appellative* by which the person holding the office is addressed, and which he considers his due, it then becomes objectionable, because it assumes the character of a “flattering title.” The objection, however, is not to titles simply indicative of office, but to titles of honour and distinction, to school

degrees, and to epithets originating in flattery or falsehood.* Let us take a brief view of some of these as they exist in the different sections of professing christendom.

In England an archbishop is *most reverend*, and is addressed by the appellation "your grace." The bishops of that country, and perhaps of Catholic countries, are called *lords*. These men in their public prayers, *when they deign to officiate*, address the LORD of heaven and earth; and after preaching meekness and humility to their hearers, impiously suffer themselves also to be called Lord!

But they are not only *lords*, they are *reverend* and *right reverend lords*, right reverend fathers, and moreover, right reverend fathers in God.† When we consider that these men profess to be the disciples of Him who was "meek and lowly," we cannot help regarding with astonishment and pity, the impious or thoughtless temerity of this association. And what is the meaning of the words "father in God?" Father of whom, or of what, and how father in God?‡§

The church of Rome has the *reverend*, the priest and the dean; the *right reverend*, the bishop; the *most reverend*, the archbishop; his *eminence*, the cardinal, &c. and to crown the hierarchy, his HOLINESS, the pope! The patriarch of the Greek church is called his "lowliness."

We have not yet arrived in this country, to the bold extremes to which titular distinction has been carried

* "A name of office differs much from a school degree brought in by the heathen." *Wickliffe in Serm. Domini in Monte.*

† It is really ludicrous, were not the subject too serious for the indulgence of levity, to see the string of titles which are assumed by some ecclesiastics, equal almost in number to the ridiculous names adopted by the Spaniards, and some other nations. Take for a specimen, *The right reverend father in God, Dr. B. Lord bishop of C.*

‡ "Words without meaning, or of equivocal meaning, are the everlasting engines of fraud and injustice."—Tooke Div. Pur. I. 62.

§ The author of the essay signed "*Phocion*," will pardon the use I have made, in the two preceding paragraphs, of his language and ideas, as the arrangement of the subject would not permit me to give the quotations *verbatim et literatim*.

in some others. But we have among us reverend, and right reverend, Doctors, and *Divines*.* Instead, too, of the scriptural term *ministry*, we have them distinguished by the more imposing one of *clergy*, while the rest of their christian brethren are the humble *laity*.

A distinction of this kind in society is injurious, because it tends to foster the idea of an order of men more holy and privileged than others, and to whom the important subject of religion more belongs than to the rest of their christian brethren, whose industry must be taxed to support their idleness. But religion is of universal obligation, and will not admit of having its vital concerns transferred to any set of men. It is true, those who are called of God to labour in the work of salvation, are, more than others, set apart to an especial work. But the system which requires that these should be a distinct order, exempt from the care of providing for themselves, and the exclusive judges and directors in spiritual concerns, (thus lording it over the flock,) is at once in opposition to the spirit of christianity, and the practice of the apostles.

But it is this love of distinction, this desire of superiority and the praise of men, which has, at all times, been the fruitful source of titles. It was this disposition in the scribes and pharisees which occasioned the pointed animadversion of our Saviour, Matt. xxiii. "All their works they do for to be seen of men : they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But," says he, "be not ye called Rabbi ; for one is your master, even Christ ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon earth : for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters : for

* It may be imagined by some, that the use of this word, in connexion with the name of the apostle John, in the title to the Apocalypse, is a sanction for the present use of it, as applied to ministers. But this is for want of information. The titles of that book, in the MSS. extant, are very various, several omitting the word in question, and others containing additional epithets, savouring not less strongly of the apostate church of Rome.

one is your master, even Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”*

One would suppose, after this plain and positive language, those who adopt the use of such titles as have been enumerated, are not in the practice of perusing their bibles, or that they consider the injunctions contained in the sacred volume of but little importance. Perhaps, however, a liberal construction of the passage will show that all this has no relation to ministers of the present day, but was only designed to reprove the arrogance of the scribes and pharisees. To urge any thing of this kind, would be to discover the very spirit of the scribes and pharisees who were very favourable in judging of themselves, but strict in relation to others, binding heavy burdens on them which they themselves would not move with one of their fingers. But, says the text, “Jesus spake to the multitude and to his disciples.” Moreover, are the same dispositions less reprehensible in a christian minister than a Jewish lawyer?

The three titles noticed by our Lord were the principal ones adopted by the Jewish teachers. Rabbi is a Hebrew word signifying Doctor or teacher. In the original it is very comprehensive, expressing also greatness, or superiority. There were three forms of this word in use among the Jews, indicative of different degrees of dignity. Rabh, Rabbi, and Rabban or Rabbin. These Rabbis were held in the highest estimation by the people, and looked up to as infallible oracles in religious matters.

The next title forbidden by our Saviour is *father*. The prohibition, however, was not intended to extend to the use of the word by children to parents, but to its use as an empty title of honour and distinction. The allusion was probably to the AB, or *father* of the Sanhedrin. Master, or leader, *καθηγητης*, was another favourite title among the Jews.

* “Thou hearest here,” says Zuinglius, “that the titles of Masters and Doctors are not of God, because Christ forbids this thing.”

It was not until the Jewish church became extremely corrupt that the use of titles was adopted among them, and they were then borrowed from the custom of heathen nations. The title of Rabbi appears to have come originally from the Chaldeans; for before the captivity, when mention was made of Judea, we do not find it used, but only in connexion with the officers of the king of Babylon.

"None of the Prophets," says Adam Clarke, "had ever received this title, nor any of the Jewish teachers before the time of *Hillel* and *Shammai*, which was about the time of our Lord; and as disputes on several subjects had run high between these two schools, the people were of course divided; some acknowledging *Hillel* as Rabbi,—infallible teacher, and others giving this title to *Shammai*. The Pharisees, who always sought the honour that comes from men, assumed the title, and got their followers to address them by it.

"Though the title of Rabbi, was comparatively recent in the time of our Lord, yet it was in great vogue, as were the others, *father* and *master*. Some had all three titles, for thus in *Bab. Maccoth*, fol. 24, 'It is feigned,' says *Lightfoot*, 'that when king Jehosaphat saw a disciple of the wise men, he rose up out of his throne, and embraced him, and said אבי אביר רבי רבי מרי מרי *Abbi Abbi, Rabbi Rabbi, Mori Mori*, Father Father! Teacher Teacher! Master Master!'"

Here then are the three principal titles in use, at that time, among the Jews, and which were condemned by the only rightful Lord and Master, in the most unequivocal manner. And as the Jews derived them in the first instance, from the heathen, so may their use among christians be originally traced to the same source. They were entirely unknown in the early christian church. In fact, so inconsistent are they with the humility and self-abasement which were conspicuous in the lives of the first promulgators of the gospel, that nothing would appear, even now, more ridiculous than such phrases as *The reverend Mr. Paul*; *The right reverend Dr. Peter*, &c. But when Constantine, and the Romans under him, embraced christianity, they intro-

duced into the church, already sufficiently corrupt, a mass of heathenism inconsistent with the genius and simplicity of the gospel; and among the rest the use of titles, which they had themselves in some measure borrowed from the servile courts of Asia.* The number, however, which at that time was small, has since been enlarged by the folly and vanity of later ages. The origin of some of them is as curious as it is puerile and nonsensical. Among the Romans the laurel tree was dedicated to Apollo, their god of wisdom. Such among them as were considered deserving, became *Laureati*, and were crowned with garlands of laurel. Hence originated the degree of Bachelor of Arts, formed from the Latin words *Bacca laurius*, laurel berries. In this way heathenism crept in, and is continued among the professors of christianity.

Many more scripture passages might be cited in confirmation of the impropriety of using vain titles, and the incompatibility of the spirit that delights in them, with the spirit and disposition of a christian. But those which have already been quoted are sufficiently full to the point. We see in the first place, the Scribes and Pharisees reprehended for their foolish affectation of these titles, and the delight they took in being called by them. Again, the disposition is charged upon them as a cause of their unbelief in the Messiah: "How can ye believe who receive honour one of another, &c." Indeed, nothing is more opposed than this disposition, to the humility which is requisite to the reception of the truths of the gospel;—I mean their vital and effec-

* "The manly pride of the Romans," says Gibbon, "content with substantial power, had left to the vanity of the east the forms and ceremonies of ostentatious greatness. But when they had lost even the semblance of those virtues which were derived from their ancient freedom, the simplicity of Roman manners was insensibly corrupted by the stately affectation of the courts of Asia." "The most distinguished Romans," Phocion observes, "even after the republic was subverted, addressed each other by letter in the simplest terms. Cicero writes to Atticus, Horace to Macænas, (descended from a line of kings) Pliny to Trajan, (the emperor) and Trajan to Pliny: they began with "health," and ended with "farewell." While we, with Asiatic servility of manner, are not only the *servants* of our correspondents, but their obedient servants; and, what is still more marvellous, have the *honour* to be so."

tive reception into the heart. Further, the disciples and the multitude to whom our blessed Lord directed his discourse, are warned, in the most decisive manner, against their use.

What, then, are we to think of those who adopt the very practices condemned by him whom they acknowledge as their Lord and Master? Who, when he has told them, "be not called Doctor, Father," &c. are nevertheless delighted with these very appellations,* and such others as "your grace" "your lordship," &c. &c. Truly, our Saviour has given us a rule for judging, which I fear will apply too closely; "By their fruits ye shall know them; men do not gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles." Let those, then, who will free themselves from the severity of its application, discard, by precept and example, the use of these exterior characteristics of the inward disposition of the mind. Or, which is of still greater importance, let them seek to have their minds clothed with the humility of the Saviour, and all these inconsistent appendages must fall "even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs," and "the names of Baalim" shall be heard no more.

CHRISTOPHILUS.

For The Reformer.

As your paper seems open to favour the *people*, who think they are entitled to some voice in the ecclesiastical matters which they are called to support, perhaps you

* It is not generally known what efforts are used by some Ministers, or their friends, to obtain from some University, it is little matter how obscure or insignificant, the title of *Doctor of Divinity*. If their merit as Theological writers, is not sufficient to procure for them this honourable distinction, it is not uncommon to purchase it with money.

Such, too, is the attachment of some of them for the epithet *Reverend*, that not content with being addressed by it, and prefixing it to their names in publications, they have had the vanity or presumption to have it engraved on their door-plates. An instance of this kind may be seen in this city. It is not, however, the only one: I recollect, not long since, to have noticed the same thing on the door of a certain Episcopal preacher in the Borough of Wilmington, Delaware.

will allow some remarks, on the actual state of Church government among the *Methodists*.

The conduct of the Bishops and their friends at the last General Conference, shewed much more of that desire for power and supremacy, than was ever expected from men of such apparent lowliness and holiness of life. We are therefore afraid it is the very nature of power to corrupt its possessors. This however, was only a strife between the Preachers themselves; some of whom complained of oppression from their superiors—the Elders and Bishops, in determining their appointments; and requested to have some chance of choice in their locations. The *people* were no further interested in these things, than to be able thereby to perceive, that although the Ministers could acutely feel *for themselves*, because excluded from all choice in their stations, still they had no sympathies for the people, who yet had no more voice in the deliberations which are to impose the laws to govern them, than the people of Hindostan. This is not conformable to any principles of *government* with which *Americans* are familiar. Even the high-church ecclesiastical power, held by the Bishops “in crape and lawn,” do not affect this exclusion. The public *may* hear their ecclesiastical deliberations; but what layman ever saw into the interior of a Methodist Conference? What other body of christians too, in the United States, ever utterly exclude all lay representation, but the Methodists! A Methodist may well be humbled by this comparison. All this would be the more tolerable and acceptable, if we did not know it to be a real fact, that the *Methodist Bishops* who are so very supreme, *were never made such by Mr. Wesley*, and that the name is a mere ASSUMPTION BY THEM, and a courteous *concession* by the Preachers. The Rev. Jesse Lee’s History of Methodism states this fact. And now we find the republished “Minutes of Conference” of the year 1785, which publishes John Wesley’s letter (saying “I have appointed Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury, to be joint *Superintendents*”) thus apologizing, for the change, by a *note*, to wit: “As the translators of our version have used the English

word *Bishop* instead of Superintendent, it has been thought by us, that it would appear more scriptural to adopt the term Bishop.”*

There are too many things already in Methodism not exactly suited to the voice and feelings of many of the people, not to prove very clearly, that there must sooner or later be such a *reform* as to admit of a lay representation, which may bring into Conference, some of the views and wishes of the people. The people certainly want to have a power to send old venerable tried servants who have been preachers, and have located, to take some portion of their wisdom and *experience* into the counsels of the Church. Or to send such other delegates as they might deem competent judges in ecclesiastical affairs. We think such would feel least personal bias in the choice of ministerial candidates; and would, it is presumed, occasionally sink to the proper sphere of *exhorters* such Preachers as have never improved themselves, nor proved their call as *Teachers*. The Conferences, if wise, even for their own sakes, should wish these things;—for without counterbalancing checks from those who may be dissatisfied, with some Church proceedings, they eventually over-rule and break down their own support.

Let the people feel their *identity* with their ministry, and their support will be sure: but break this desirable union, and they will demand and exercise their independence! Already, the spirit of disaffection, has shewn itself; now there is a large body of “Reformed Methodists” in New-York and the Eastern States, who avow their disunion because of the Hierarchy. They have no Bishops and admit lay delegates. In New-York City, lately a large body went off for more freedom; and also at Cincinnati for the same object. And lately, we have seen from the English prints that 21 Preachers and 14 new Churches, are formed of the “Independent Methodists” there, because, as they thought, the parent body,

* “The name Superintendent, and the notion that Bishops and Presbyters were the same order, are now laid aside; they were mere pretexts and had served the purpose for which they were intended.”

[*Southey's Life of Wesley.*]

was too exclusive in shutting out the voice of the people. All these things should speak intelligently a *warning voice*, both to those among us who govern and who are governed.

ONE OF THE PEOPLE.

For The Reformer.

FACTS IN THE LINE OF EXPERIENCE.

The land of my nativity abounded with professing christians, though I was not born in connexion with any sect. My father, at one period of his life within my memory, was fond of military parade and pleasurable pursuits; but as his sun declined into the Western horizon, he began to reflect on the vanity of a popular mispent life, and sought an asylum in religion. In order to be rightly informed on this subject, he visited various societies of professing christians, studied their creeds, and compared their practice with the holy records, and found them to differ widely from the truths and precepts set forth by Christ and the Evangelists. Finding no rest for the sole of his foot among them, he stood aloof for years. I believe he was at this time a pious seeker after truth, and would have become more and more conformed to the divine image, had he carefully attended to the guidance of that spirit, which influenced him on his first setting out to serve the Lord with full purpose of heart. But, alas! he listened to the voice of error, and the popular sectarian delusions of the day intruded themselves into his understanding. He joined himself to a sect, and became a rigid sectarian. Viewing all others in darkness and error but the sect to which he belonged, he now began to reform and new model his household domestics, and to systematize his spouse and unruly offspring. He scribed us all down to his new creed, and delivered many rigid lectures with the rod in hand, setting forth the infallibility of his sect, and threatening to punish us severely, and even to disinheret us, if we presumed to visit any

place of worship except his own. He did not direct us to search the Scriptures for ourselves, and apply to the fountain of Divine wisdom for guidance and instruction in the path of genuine religion, but pointed us to the ancient system builders of his sect, and their comments on the Sacred writings, as the proper source for truth; and we had no alternative, but to believe and obey their rules and maxims. He further told us, when the world of mankind came to be right, they would all subscribe to the articles of his faith, and belong to his sect. This reasoning, though founded in bigotry, had the desired effect to leaven us into the same spirit, and we all soon got initiated into the fraternity: and in my minority I was trammelled and bound down in the selfish belief, that all religious sects and denominations were in error, but the one with whom I was connected. Nor was I allowed to judge for myself while under my father's jurisdiction and the iron sway of Church government.

When I arrived to years of maturity, and had liberty to exercise my reasoning faculties, I began to reflect and to examine the writings of the Evangelists, and compare them with the expositions thereon by various system builders and their adherents; and I found them, in many things, irreconcilable with one another; while each viewed his own system as infallibly right, and his sect the only true Church; mistaking *custom* for *truth*, and education and prejudice for inspiration from God. I therefore perceived, that the first thing to be done, was to unlearn false principles, and overcome the prejudices of education, by following the rules that God has given us, rather than the expositions and rules of man, or any set of men, whatever claims to infallibility they might make; for pagans, deists, mahometans, and the devotees of every party, affirm they only are right and all others wrong.

Now, there are only three ways or mediums, by which we can determine what is right or wrong; each for their proper objects, viz. our *bodily senses*, *reason* and *revelation*; and these cannot contradict one another, for God is the author of them all, and he cannot be the author of contradictions. There are many scriptural

truths, above the discovery of reason alone, but when revealed, they cannot be contrary to the dictates of sound reason : for it is by the reasoning faculties of the soul, we must judge what are the marks of true discipleship, and the evidences of a revelation from God ; and whether the Koran of Mahomet, the Articles of the church of Rome, or the system of this or that sect, or the *New Testament* be of divine authority, and the rule by which we are to be governed. It is our reasoning faculties, in a word, which make us capable of religion ; and if we give up the proper exercise of this gift, or follow not its dictates, we are no better than the brute creation, that act by instinct alone. And if we give up our senses, and do not believe them, we are worse ; and yet we must, and do give up both, and revelation too, if we worship men, and their artificial systems, creeds, and disciplines, instead of worshipping the true God, and obeying his commands.

Reformation has been on the wheel for many years, but very little has been yet accomplished : for pride, covetousness, and the friendship of this world, have soon gained ascendancy over the minds of every denomination of people, grieved the spirit, destroyed their testimony, and rendered all their attempts to promote the true kingdom of righteousness on the earth, ineffectual. And two things, especially, hinder a real reformation : the interest of the clergy, and the traditional prejudices of the people, who are duped by custom, however slavish and absurd. These prejudices affect the mind, as the jaundice does the eye, so that they view all things through a false medium, and thus err in judgment respecting what is right, while at the same time they are impressed with an idea, that they see every thing as in the mirror of truth. Most men, moreover, have the faculty of diminishing their own faults, as well as the defects of their sect, while they magnify the faults of others, and other persuasions. Thus they believe with the *will*, and not with the *understanding* ; and that contrary to reason and revelation too. Some, again, are as fond of their own opinions and mode of worship, as the sensualist is of the gratification of his

appetites, while they have very little more true religion : and hence they will not quit them, though sensible they are wrong ; but endeavour to persuade themselves that all will be well, and their outward profession of religion will cause them to be accepted of God. Thus we behold christendom gone far astray from the path of righteousness, under the influence of party spirit, prejudice and custom, and not truth ; seeking after popularity and riches, rather than to know and to do the will of God.

INTEGRITY.

PERSECUTION OF THE TRUTH.

[To show what has been done against the truth, and how its advocates have been viewed, we will here present a summary of persecutions in former times, taken from the Encyclopædia, and other respectable authority.]

Persecution of Christians by the Jews.—"The rapid progress of the christian religion under the faithful and inspired apostles, soon alarmed the Jews, and raised various persecutions against its followers. The Jews, indeed, seem at first to have been every where the chief promoters of persecution ; for we find that they officiously went from place to place, and by their calumnies and false suggestions endeavoured to excite the people against the apostles."

Persecution of Christians by the Heathens.—"The Heathens, though at first they showed no very violent spirit of persecution against the christians, soon came to hate them as much as the Jews themselves. Tacitus, (a heathen writer,) acquaints us with the causes of this hatred, when speaking of the first general persecution under Nero ; who having set the city on fire himself, attributed it to them, and thereupon persecuted them with the utmost violence, thinking by doing what was so gratifying to the people in general,* they would overlook his own crimes, and prevent any investigation of the subject. Tacitus states that they were already ab-

* Christians in these days differed widely from those denominated such at this time : being then *chosen out of the world*, agreeably to our Lord's words, *the world hated them*. The apostle Paul was beheaded at Rome about this period.

horred on account of their many and enormous crimes.* "The author of this name," [christians] says he "was Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius, was executed under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea. The pestilent superstition was for a while suppressed: but it revived again, and spread, not only over Judea, where this evil was first broached, but reached Rome, whither from every quarter of the earth is constantly flowing whatever is hideous and abominable amongst men, and is there readily embraced and practised. First, therefore, were apprehended such as openly avowed themselves to be of that sect; then by them were discovered an immense multitude; and all were convicted, not of the crime of burning Rome, but of hatred and enmity to mankind. Their death and tortures were aggravated by cruel derision and sport; for they were either covered with the skins of wild beasts and torn in pieces by devouring dogs, or fastened to crosses, or wrapped up in combustible garments, that, when the day-light failed, they might, like torches, serve to dispel the darkness of the night. Hence, towards the miserable sufferers, however guilty and deserving the most exemplary punishment, compassion arose; seeing they were doomed to perish, not with a view to the public good, but to gratify the cruelty of one man."

"In the reign of the humane Emperor Antonius Pious [A. D. 105.] the christians were greatly persecuted; their character was much misrepresented, and they suffered various punishments in consequence of the former edicts of the Roman Government against them. Justin undertook their defence, and published his first *Apology* for them. This vindication of the christians produced a good effect, and Antonius gave orders that the christians should be treated with more lenity. We extract the following from his letter to the *Commonalty of Asia*.

'I am well assured that the gods themselves will take

* It is particularly to be observed, that righteous people are never persecuted *as righteous people*. They are ever represented as offenders and dangerous persons. Nor is the truth ever opposed *as the truth*. It is considered error, and calculated to have a pernicious tendency. When the Friends were persecuted at Boston, (four of whom were hung) nearly all the laws made against them were prefaced with these words: "*Whereas there is a most accursed sect risen up.*" &c.

care that this kind of men, [the christians] shall not escape, it being much more their interest than yours, to punish those who refuse to worship them.—You do but the more confirm them in their own opinions while you vex and oppress them, and accuse them of being Atheists, and bring other charges against them which you are not able to prove.'

"Many of the Heathens were men of *candour*, in the modern sense of the word, and tolerated various religions. They admitted that *all religions might be good*, except the christian, in its purity. They had no objection to a community of worship, and sometimes they would take a foreign God into the number of their deities. The emperor Tiberius, on receiving the *Acts of Pilate*, proposed to the senate to enrol *Christ* in the number of the Roman deities. But after the *Romans* found that christianity was a religion which would hold no fellowship with their own, but directly condemned it, they began to hate and persecute it. They considered it as unsociable and exclusive, as merely nominal christians consider true christianity at this day."

Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church.

The Board of Superintendants of the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church are to meet at Harrisburg, (Pa.) on the third Wednesday of the present month, for the purpose of choosing a site for this institution. They observe: "The dignity of a Theological Seminary, in which the first talents are usually engaged, and the best order and harmony prevail, and its happy influence upon the religious, the moral, the literary, and the pecuniary interests of the place where it is situated, make it a valuable acquisition, and it is hoped an honorable competition will be excited and liberal proposals offered for the location of the Seminary, which on that day they will receive and consider."

Theological Seminaries, Missionary Societies, &c. appear to have become much like the fashions of the times. Because such or such a Society have them, others think they must have them also.

From the New-York Weekly Museum.

WILLIAM PENN and THOMAS STORY, travelling together in Virginia, were caught by a shower of rain and unceremoniously sheltered themselves from it in a tobacco house, the owner of which happening to be within it, accosted them with "you have a great deal of impudence to trespass on my premises—you enter without leave—do you know who I am." To which it was answered no—"why then, I would have you to know I am a justice of peace;" to which Thomas Story replied, "my friend here makes such things as these—he is the governor of Pennsylvania." The great man quickly abated of his haughtiness and invited them in the mansion house; they declined his courtesy, and when the shower was over, they proceeded on their journey.

To Patrons and Subscribers.

The Editors of the Reformer respectfully entreat, if any have not received their numbers, or any miscarriages have taken place, that notice thereof may be communicated, and they will immediately rectify the deficiency. We sincerely regret occurrences of this nature, and no subscriber shall lose in consequence of them from whatever quarter they may have arisen. In such cases, we would not even desire the postage of the letters to be paid. But here it may be proper to state, that several in some parts of this State, and particularly at Carlisle and Harrisburg, have complained of not getting their numbers, and we have sent them again, when they have been lying in the Post Office at those places. It is not always sufficient to inquire at a Post Office where a number are sent in one package, if there is any thing for them, as it will be supposed letters only are meant; and after examining accordingly, they may be told "there is nothing;" they should explain what they are to receive. If in a neighbourhood where there are several subscribers, a package has miscarried, it will be best to notify it to the Post-master, or some other individual, and one letter will answer for the whole; as it will be inconvenient and expensive for every person to write. We believe we can say with safety, that all numbers have been regularly forwarded, after we once received notice of persons wishing to take the work: and all possible care hereafter will be used to prevent any mistakes, or miscarriages from taking place.

Many, we are sensible, could wish to see this work discountenanced, and their influence has been exerted in accordance with the wish; we therefore feel the more grateful to those who have aided in its circulation. We engaged in the publication under great discouragement, and with few subscribers, but they have since considerably increased; and we purpose to continue it for the next year. Those, therefore, who have not given information of wishing to decline their subscription, will have their numbers forwarded to them as heretofore.

It is our intention from the commencement of the next year, to have the numbers covered with blue paper, which will render them less liable to be injured by use, and the postage will be no more.


Our object has been the welfare of mankind, and the promotion of true religion and righteousness; and we must leave our readers to decide, how far our pages have corresponded with this design.

To some it may be proper to state, that the title page and index, the latter part of this number, are designed to be placed at the forepart of the work.

To Correspondents.

Two communications from W. D. have been received; and though we approve of the intentions of the writer, it might not be altogether proper to insert them. We feel sorry not to be able to insert communications when sent to us, but we have to act according to the best of our judgment; and correspondents must not be hurt, if we sometimes disappoint their expectations. Our situation in this respect is often unpleasant; and no one need to envy us the privilege that properly belongs to us. At a time like the present, when scarcely any thing receives much attention, it is not so easy, even in a good cause, to write with proper effect. If we would successfully oppose evil, our blows against it must not only be well directed, but they must have force.

We think Daniel might present us with some remarks that might be useful; and if his communications shall be as concise as possible, we trust he will have no cause to complain of our omitting any part of them. We feel sensible, that he will understand the nature and design of the work: and until a letter box shall be prepared, he, with others so disposed, may put their communications in the Post Office, directed to the care of the agent, and the letter carrier will deliver them with safety.

 The Editors having transferred the agency for The Reformer to Joseph Rakestraw, No. 256, North Third Street, correspondents will please, hereafter, to address their communications accordingly; and those wishing to become subscribers, can signify it by mail or private conveyance—and also receive their numbers, or have them forwarded agreeably to their directions.

Price of The Reformer one dollar a year, half payable in advance, the remainder at the end of six months.—New Subscribers, if they request it, can be supplied with numbers from the commencement of the work.

